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Career Switching
And Organizational Politics
Among Naval Officers
by
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CAREER SWITCHING

INTRODUCTION

There exist multiple conceptual definitions of the term "career". Some classify the career as following and ascending over time a company's career path or accepting its definition of becoming successful. Others view the career as passing through a series of stages in order to become a full-fledged member of one's profession (irrespective of any particular organization). Some see the career as a life-long sequence of jobs or roles. There are even those who feel that the concept means one's total personal history through life, not just one's work history. In this volume, Driver's writing highlights various career concepts. Hall (1976) has also addressed this subject.

For this chapter, the career is viewed as a sequence of work-related experiences which comprise a work history and which reflect a chosen work-related life theme. Thus, the career is seen as long-term. It comprises more life space than a job but it is not all of life. And it demands individual choices in reference to a cognitive map about the dynamic interaction between work, self, family, and external social forces. This is so even if the person decides to do nothing.

This chapter is concerned with career switching by those people who choose to change careers. Certainly it is a difficult proposition for anyone to radically alter one's work history as opposed to switching jobs; nevertheless, this is happening with increasing frequency (Business Week, 1977). The increase may be associated with recently documented adult life changes (Vaillant, 1977; Gould, 1972; Levinson, 1978). Another possibility is that career changes are congruent with social unrest and societal change. Perhaps uninteresting and stagnate organizations, inflexible job designs, and the employer's inability to attract and hold high-potential employees result in workers who drastically alter their career patterns. Finally, as Driver has suggested, some persons view career change as a means of attaining career success.

Some research on career changing is described below. This is followed by a discussion of career orientations in the military. There is something to be learned about how military careerists regularly plan and strategize for career change. The final section attempts to outline a theoretical framework for understanding career switching.

A LITERATURE REVIEW

Some argue that there is a trend, especially among professional and "successful" managers, towards early retirement (Walker, 1976). In the future persons may cease their first occupations at about age fifty and begin actively pursuing a second career, especially if part-time or voluntary endeavors are included in the definition of a career (Kelleher, 1973).

Several major factors work against dropping the first career and taking up another: the lack of financial resources sufficient to risk a new career venture; personal insecurity associated with delving into the unknown, especially when one's family situation may require financial security and stability (i.e., older children may be requiring college educations, geographic stability and regular parental involvement in their activities); age itself may mean low marketability due to some age discrimination in hiring practices (Hughs, 1974). The decision to switch careers often focuses on one or more of these issues.

Most of the literature agrees that age is certainly one factor in opting for another career. Some associate career mobility with the two periods of restlessness in one's personal life development: the end of the identity period when one is still seeking his niche (ages 28-32) and the mid-life crisis (ages 40-48). The first corresponding age-career transition makes good sense because it takes some time to actually decide one's career (Hall, 1976) and the first few jobs may be viewed as learning experiences to that end.

The mid-life crisis career switch is a much more puzzling phenomenon. One study (Clopton, 1973) revealed that career shifters were acutely aware of their

mortality and were otherwise experiencing a personal crisis. Miller (1976) discovered decreasing job satisfaction among those surveyed between ages 38-57. Most of the executives embarking on second careers are over age forty-five (Business Week, 1977). Many recognize obsolescence as a critical managerial problem (Connor and Fieldman, 1973; Thompson and Dalton, 1971 and 1976). It is quite probable, therefore, that there will be more other-than-primary career activity either among those who are most aware of their mid-life crisis and attempt the greatest effort to manage it (Schultz, 1974) or among those who are forced into early retirement because their companies view them as obsolete.

Indeed, Schultz (1974) believes that those who are most aware and growth-oriented switch to second careers. He explains:

> Recent studies have suggested that those who actively pursue a second career may be better adjusted and have a higher need to achieve and a greater sense of self-esteem and ambition than those who stay in their first careers. They seem to be people for whom personal challenge and fulfillment are highly important factors, even more so than salary.

These propositions must be qualified, however, because some research reveals that career stability also increases as persons grow older and have a greater need for security (McLaughlin and Tiedeman, 1974). Byrne's study (1975) also suggests that while about 9% of all professional, technical and managerial employees changed occupations during 1972, only about 67% of those actually changed careers. In addition, over two-thirds of a very large sample of federal employees (300,000) had never switched organizations, geographic locations or occupations--let alone their careers (Scism, 1974). There is evidence to suggest that many middle age employees who say they change careers actually switch over to management as part of a normal career transition up the hierarchy. (Nigro and Meier, 1975; Byrne, 1975).

According to other studies, another reason for choosing a different career is the personality trait of the individual careerist. Driver's article herein describes how different employees conceptualize their career success. The "spiral" pattern certainly provides for a second or even a third career. Laserson (1973) categorized

four types of people who were career-switchers: those who failed in their primary ventures, those who made major life-career changes based on psychological change, those who became bored and looked for new challenges, those who possessed "in reserve" resources and were secure enough to make a change.

A third reason for embarking on an alternative career (or not so embarking) is financial security. One study found that all sampled career changers had accumulated enough money to see them through a transitional period (Clopton, 1973). Case studies of second-careerists have also revealed that many tend to be financially secure and, therefore, able to act on their mid-life fantasies. (Wheelock and Demroth, 1975). Early retirement provides a sense of "base" income which permits a more speculative career.

Finally, Schein's work (1978) uncovers basic values, motives, needs and talents which keep a person pursuing a certain kind of career. These characteristics act as "career anchors" to influence a person's decision to change occupations, organizations and objectives. The career anchor also impacts on one's career satisfaction according to how well his current career demands and opportunities match with his underlying needs, as prescribed by the career anchor.

The five primary anchors discovered by Schein are: (1) need for autonomy or independence at work, (2) need for job security, (3) need for technical-functional competence, (4) need for managerial experience, and (5) need for exercising creativity on the job. These values tend to hold constant during much of the work life irregardless of a particular switch in actual work assignments or place of employment.

While Schein has not argued this point, it is possible to postulate that at least two of the five anchors could be a basis for career switching. A 'creative" profile could mean someone who gets bored once he has achieved his original objective and then needs a new challenge (which may mean a new career). An "autonomy" anchored individual would supposedly remain marginal to many endeavors and, if

indeed he became involved in even his first career, may soon feel crowded and seek an opportunity for new-found independence--hence another career. A "technical-functional competence" person may be likely to look for a second job (and maybe a new career) at that point where the organization requires that he switch over from his specialty to a managerial role. On the other hand, those persons with a "managerial" anchor would be most likely to stay and ascend the hierarchy or be "linear" in Driver's terms. The "security" minded would probably opt for stability.

CAREER SWITCHING: THE NAVY CASE

The military is a unique organization in that early retirement is the rule rather than the exception. A study currently in progress (Derr, 1977) indicates (tentatively) that up to 70% of the career Naval officers queried plan to remain in the service no more than twenty years. Someone of average rank and ability in the military may remain a maximum of twenty-five years. This means that most will retire at about ages 40-45. Many non-military career switchers do not face the prospect of a change deadline; they act more spontaneously, although some may indeed be just as oriented to changing at a given point in time as are those in the military. But as a group, military careerists can provide important information about how large numbers of those faced with major work changes plan to advance their next career venture. This report is based on results of lengthy individual interviews with some seventy Naval officers and is tentative in that other sources of data (e.g., questionnaires) have not yet been analyzed. Those queried came from five different Naval communities: aviation, surface, submarine, supply, civil engineering. Research instruments and methods are reported elsewhere (Derr, 1977).

Three different career orientations have become apparent. The first is labeled current careerist to connote the person's predisposition toward achieving success in the military or current career. The second orientation is that of the balanced careerist, someone who pursues simultaneously and with equal vigor his ongoing career and his next career. The second careerist, a member of the third group, focuses

mainly on his next work-life venture, often at the expense of his current career.

An estimated 25% of those interviewed could be called current (military) careerists. They are motivated by aspirations for high rank, by patriotism and by the search for adventure. They are most often unrestricted line officers in the surface warfare, aviation and submarine communities. They have few second-career plans and desire to remain in the military, preferably in an action job, as long as possible.

How these current careerists plan to attain high rank as Naval officers is interesting. According to the perceptions of those interviewed, up to the rank of Commander the military usually engages in a sort of pre-selection system whereby a person's assignments (billets) and his ratings determine his promotion. Thus, the system, in response to Congressional pressure against favoritism, is quite rational and even automatic at the selection level. What every officer realizes, however, is that he must influence those who make assignments so that he has the right billet portfolio when he comes up for review. Thus he spends endless hours on the telephone in contact with persons who assign billets trying to influence these "detailers" in order to get the best next job. There is an awareness of which assignments are needed at what point in an officer's career and which ones not to take. The best billets are said to be visible, where influential others can see your work and come to know you. They may be jobs normally assigned to someone more senior or appear challenging or involve use of the latest equipment and technology. Once assigned, one must try to please the Commanding Officer (CO) in order to get high ratings.

Another tactic is to acquire a group of influential peers who will come to know one's value and consequently influence more senior officers who may be sitting on the Selection Boards. At the rank of Captain and Admiral, peers may indeed be members of the Selection Board. Those having attended the U. S. Naval Academy are seen to have a decided edge when it comes to having and using influential peers.

An important strategy is to select early a few "sponsors" (more senior officers) It is important to know how the system operates in order to judge whether these persons are themselves likely to be promoted. If these mentors adopt the mentee and go on to become influential, they can perform some very useful services. For example, they can intervene to influence which assignment a person gets. They can influence the Selection Boards for marginal cases. And, at the more senior levels where the procedures are more informal, they can politic amongst their peers for a given candidate.

Each officer community perceives its own "tickets" to be punched in order for members to advance up the hierarchy. Submariners must get nuclear training and good billets in nuclear submarines. Aviators should "stay in the cockpit" or remain flying as long as possible and should lead a squadron. Surface officers need to become the CO of a newer class destroyer or frigate. An officer's career in the Supply Corps is enhanced by Washington tours at headquarters as often and as long as possible. In the Civil Engineering Corps the careerist must rotate through a series of relevant experiences, such as public works, Seabees, and staff and professional certification as an engineer.

Finally, those interviewed saw luck or chance as an important variable which could enhance or hinder one's career. Being at the right/wrong place at the right/wrong time was seen as important. Many pointed to examples of otherwise good Naval officers whose careers were ruined because a ship was damaged for reasons beyond their control. If one got good billets, had influential peers, behaved competently and was extremely lucky throughout his career, the interviewees thought, one could, perhaps, make Captain.

Balanced careerists, about 50% of the sample population, saw themselves as potentially high ranking Navy officers, but they were equally concerned about preparing themselves for a second career which, they believed, would begin after twenty years of service. They were attempting to pursue their Navy careers and their post-

Navy careers simultaneously. Most officers in this category plan to make at least Lieutenant Commander. They pursue their Navy careers as much to gain higher retirement benefits (half of base pay as of date of severance) as they do to succeed at their military occupations. Balanced careerists and their wives report a fear of Congress changing the retirement benefits on the twenty-year retirement option before they can get out.

Most officers in this category work hard at the strategies important to the current careerists. At the same time, however, they develop specific long-range plans for their life and work following retirement. One officer had purchased a farm in his hometown and was preparing to run it in eight more years. Another was pursuing courses to become an elementary school teacher. A third had become interested in computers during one tour of duty and wanted to find a niche in the computer technology industry. To this end, he was also trying to get all of the experience and training possible in the military before severance (10 years away). He felt that he could accomplish this goal by influencing his shore billets and then using his sea billets to complete the Navy career requisite

A fourth example wanted to retire in a particular geographic area and attempted to influence his detailer to send him there whenever possible. His career plans were as yet unfixed but he was considering various opportunities and making contacts in the region in order to decide his next venture and start to prepare for it.

A number of wives figured importantly in the balanced career pattern. Many mentioned a joint plan whereby they were willing to defer their own career agendas until their husbands' retirement, after which would come "their turn". From the wife's perspective the officer's second career plans required a job which gave him ample time for parenting and other support activities for her.

Balanced careerists, therefore, begin in earnest to plot out their second career as much as ten years prior to retirement and their planning becomes more intense as they get closer to the severance date. Many seek to get a specialized

type of training (e.g., computer technician, operations research analyst, nuclear engineer) which will be a useful commodity in the civilian job market. Some invest in real estate and family businesses. Others cultivate contacts with civilian contractors or keep actively in touch with former officers who are now employed elsewhere.

For many, it will be indeed a career switch since their primary activity as an officer is that of a general "commander" who rotates every two to three years between his military specialty (e.g., on a ship, in a squadron) and a more general management support position (e.g., project management, personnel, financial management). The military jobs which have the most second-career potential are frequently short-lived opportunities of perhaps two divided tours of duty in a whole military career. For example, an organization development specialist might spend three years as an internal consultant at a Human Resource Management Center, go back to sea duty, go to another shore billet, back to sea and, finally, go into a policy position in administering OD programs. Moreover, one's specialty training (e.g., Naval Postgraduate School) normally takes place at mid-career and may be somewhat obsolete by the time the officer retires.

Balance is critical for this careerist. While a number of billets are second-career enhancing (e.g., graduate education, training as a technician) they may not enrich one's military experience portfolio. For line officers, the military tends to reward one for having served in combat, on ships, with the troops, or in some directly defense-related activity. The support activities are seen as necessary but not as critically important. Many of these activities could be accomplished by civil service. Becoming highly specialized, by becoming very knowledgeable in one's field or receiving a Ph.D., is somewhat suspect. Military officers are supposed to be general managers. It is, therefore, often difficult to pursue the current and secondary career simultaneously and sometimes, to the extent one can influence the situation, one must seize on a second career opportunity at the expense of his military career. The closer one is to retirement, the truer this is.

The final group are the second careerists. At an early stage they choose to forego a military career. Most of these persons are disenchanted with the Navy. They might dislike the nature of the work. Their wives and families may be dissatisfied. Perhaps career anchors have been violated (e.g., the pilot who is technically oriented and must get out of the airplane and switch over to administration). Or a combination of all these factors may enter into their career malaise and cause them to withdraw their energy and become second-career oriented.

Another segment of this group, unlike those who have become "turned off" to the Navy, believe that their opportunities for a successful military career are limited. They perceive that it would be wiser to change their career direction. Some of the interviewees in this category had already been passed over once by the Selection Board and were expecting to be involuntarily retired in the near future.

It is important to understand the distinction between those who are second-career oritned by choice and those who are not. The voluntary second-careerists and the balanced careerists are likely to both strive for some level of competence and advancement in their military careers. What differentiates them is that balanced careerists seem equally concerned about both careers (the Navy and the next venture) whereas the voluntary second careerists clearly put their second career in first priority. This is manifest in how they use their time, energy, and planning moments and how they articulate their priorities.

For example, one officer at the Naval Postgraduate School was busy searching a new career because he had been denied promotion on the first round of the Selection Board. He was a Civil Engineering Corps officer and had not succeeded at demonstrating proficiency as an architect. Moreoever, he had decided that he did not like and was not in fact particularly talented at it. Thus he was busy exploring other career options and using his time and energy for that purpose.

Another submarine officer had joined initially to "see the world". He and his wife were at a point in the military career when they would have to choose between

remaining in the Navy, with very stringent requirements for family separation, or get out. They chose the latter course because they had already lived abroad once, their children were getting older and they wanted to spend more time together as a family. This officer was busy pursuing a line of work broadly connected to some of his shore duty experience and tied to several "contacts" he had made while in that job. He was quitting by choice.

A third second-careerist was an aviator whose goal was a Ph.D. in management. He worked hard to influence his detailer to give him billets which allowed him to be near University centers. He was preparing to teach at the junior college level. He also read extensively in his field and wrote about relevant aspects of his naval experience to demonstrate before retirement his academic competence by publishing several articles. He was to retire after twenty years as a Lieutenant Commander, having chosen jobs during the last seven years of his military service which were not career-enhancing for his Navy occupation.

A distinction must be made between a second-career and a second-job orientation. One is basic to a change of life and work. The other is directed at a change of setting. Some Naval officers who are second-career oriented maneuver themselves into their second careers while still in the military. Upon retirement they simply change settings and pursue the same career in a new job. Following is an example of this phenomenon.

In one study in which the author participated (Giauque, Derr, Eoyang and Harris, 1977), over 2,500 questionnaires were distributed to paramedical health care providers in the three branches of the Armed Forces. In-depth interviews were also conducted. Many physician assistants (PA's) entered the field, after having been Medical Corpsmen, in order to seek a second career. Seventy-five percent of the 242 respondents planned to remain no more than twenty years even if given the opportunity. Many had taken pay and status cuts (from Master Sergeant or Master Chief Petty Officer to Warrant Officer) in order to get into the PA program.

When queried, physician assistants seemed very much aware of the PA opportunities on the "outside", saw them as preferable to those in the military and hoped that the perceived job market would continue until they could retire. They spoke about the attractive PA positions on the Alaskan Pipeline (rumored at $30,000 per year salaries), in insurance agencies, in private practice with former military physicians, in teaching and administration. They seemed quite open about their intentions to use their current jobs as "bases" for launching activities related to their future jobs. Developing and maintaining skills getting new educational experiences to enhance their credibility and competence, maintaining their credentials, building informal networks with current and former physicians and peers for future employment and acquiring knowledge about future trends in the profession, were all important strategies actively pursued.

Table I below substantiates this point. It lists scores from a preference scale with several items supporting a non-military physician assistant job. These items had considerably higher mean scores than those more oriented to the current military career.

TABLE I

Second-Job Support Preferences
for Physician Assistants

Preference For	Mean Score*
autonomous working conditions (so can learn much on your own)	3.18
technical competence (including training/experiences)	4.63
creative/innovative opportunities (new learning opportunities)	4.10
early retirement	3.60
ample free time for self/family (to take extra courses, etc.)	4.20

*On a scale of 1-5 where a higher score means a greater preference.

One of the features distinguishing a second-career or second-job orientation, as compared to a balanced-career focus, is the extent to which time, energy and attitudes are openly engaged in a future activity. This was the case with physician assistants, some of whom still had ten years of active duty remaining. Moreover, those in policy positions seemed to recognize the situation and responded by (1) refusing to recruit PA's prior to their having ten years experience in the military so that they would remain for at least ten more years (until the twenty-year retirement date), (2) offering challenging job experiences and occasional skill building workshops, etc. relevant to the next job, as opposed to increasing military benefits by allowing PA's to become regular officers (the highest rank they could attain was Warrant Officer III), and (3) allowing the job market myths to perpetuate without clarifying the "realities" so that the best Medical Corpsmen would be attracted to the PA Program.

Thus, in the case of physician assistants both the employer and the employee were second-career and second-job oriented. The Bureaus of Medicine seemed to realize that the PA's were highly motivated by second-career training leading to a second job. They appeared to take advantage of the PA's in terms of opportunities for them while in the military. The PA's, on the other hand, appreciated this second-career opportunity and worked hard at their professions in order to get the experience and skills needed for a second job. They took advantage of the military in preparing for their next PA jobs. Both the employee and employer seemed to benefit.

It is proposed that in some instances second careerists do, in fact, match the short-term needs of the employing organization. In many cases, however, it appears to have been a bad career marriage early on and leads only to a strategy whereby the careerist can separate from the organization having fulfilled some of his work-life goals.

Table II below summarizes the three categories of careerists which have been discussed.

TABLE II

CHARACTERISTICS OF NAVAL OFFICER RETIREES

TYPE	APPROXIMATE % OF SAMPLE	EXTENT OF SECOND-CAREER PLANNING	CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO NAVY	COMMITMENT TO NEXT CAREER	POTENTIAL FOR PRODUCTIVITY
Current Careerist	25%	Very Limited	High	Low	Excellent
Balanced Careerist	50%	Of Equal Importance To Naval Career	Mixed	Mixed	Good
Second Careerist	25%	Extensive	Low	High	Minimal (Sometimes excellent if tied directly to next career)

It is important to stress here that the balanced careerist may be an excellent Naval officer. If he is talented and energetic, he may well be able to manage two consuming activities at once. Indeed, he may be a more achievement-oriented yet balanced individual who is a study prototype for career transitioning.

His strategy for pursuing two careers at once might be somewhat devious, however. He must keep his next career plans somewhat secretive because those who are rewarded most by the employer are current careerists. He must give off the image of being a current careerist and pursue his next career in a very unobtrusive manner.

Second careerists, on the other hand, can be more overt in their strategies. While they need to do the minimum in order to at least meet their own short-term objectives (e.g., get selected so they can have the twenty-year retirement benefits, get good military jobs which allow them to pursue their next career), they can also afford to be viewed as less than top-flight officer material. Sometimes second careerists can pursue the current job with much enthusiasm and competence--

especially when it is directly related to the second career.

One critical issue still to be determined is the extent to which the military setting is unique. Very few other organizations allow for or promote retirement at such an early age, thereby forcing some of their members to pursue second jobs and second careers. Moreover, few second careerists embark on new ventures with such an income/benefit package. Finally, few enterprises promote major occupational change at an age corresponding to major life change (the mid-life crisis), where the potential for both self-renewal and self-doubt are great.

THEORETICAL DISCUSSION

Career switching can be viewed as a person-organization power struggle. The organization traditionally rewards careerists who are talented, loyal, obedient, hard-working, and supported by a "wife" at home. Careerists respond to rewards and options offered by the organization and its self-interests in turn are served when they compete for its positions and rewards. But, as has been shown in the case of the military and strongly implied if not substantiated in the literature reviewed, careerists themselves have multiple personal interests which may or may not be served by the organization. Because their career interests can be fulfilled through the organization/occupation, current careerists employ strategies and ends compatible with organizational demands. Balanced careerists, on the other hand, find their interests sometimes congruent, sometimes incongruent with those of the organization/occupation. Second careerists work in self-interest that is often at variance with that of the organization/occupation. Every careerist, to some degree, is aware of and participates in organizational politics.

In career politics at least two patterns are dominant: the politics of the current careerist and those of the career switcher. The ways in which current careerists in the military got billets and good reports, used sponsors and peer influence and punched "tickets" in analogous to the competitive organizational

politics frequently described in the literature. (Crozier, 1964; French and Raven, 1959; Jay, 1967; Jennings, 1971; Korda, 1975; Kotter, 1977; Salancik and Pfeffer, 1977; Schein, 1976; and Tushman, 1977). The politics are quite different in the instance of the career switcher where self-interests are often basically incompatible with those of the organization/occupation. He must participate in somewhat more complicated political jousting.

It should be observed here that career switching is different from job hopping. The job hopper is more likely to be a current careerist whose self-interests are more congruent with those of the organization. This person usually works hard and renders service while he is in the enterprise, and he maintains the esteem of fellow workers who probably view his change as "a better deal elsewhere." By contrast, a career changer is likely to be viewed by both the organization and fellow workers as threatening. His new interests are usually unrelated to the self-interests of either peers or the system and resources invested in him are not likely to have future pay-offs for them.

Career switchers usually need a waiting period in which they use the current career to launch their next one. This period provides important time to search alternatives; to become informed about the "realities" and unintended problems in the new field; to investigate the external factors such as societal changes, new laws, economic patterns and other forces which might impinge on the new career; to gain more knowledge, new skills and experiences relevant to launching the next work/life venture; and to exit from the current career at the right time, with the right financial backing and the right reputation important to beginning anew.

A career switcher is likely to be secretive about his self-interests for fear of being treated as a traitor and/or losing the benefits which come from maximizing opportunities during this transition period. In fact, where possible and depending

on the strength of his next career orientation, he will find ways to take advantage of the transition period by planing the current careerist political game. He presents himself as what the organization wants. In some way, perhaps some devious way, he matches attitudes and behaviors favorable to the organization while pursuing his own agendas. Gaining a more congruent career image allows him the favors and added opportunities necessary to develop his next career, and he maintains enough current influence to use the organization as a base in order to launch his next venture.

Some military officers who were balanced careerists discussed such a strategy. One told about coming to work very early in the morning, being conspicuous and appearing as if he were eager to get started and perform. He would then leave his door open, as if he were at a meeting, and spend from about 9-11 A.M. working on a second-career education program. Another officer described how he had manipulated the system to get second-career experience and training while making it appear as if he were doing this for a future Navy billet.

Intentions such as career switching, which are incongruent with the organization/occupational norms, goals and behavior patterns are, therefore, best either hidden or worked out within the context of more acceptable organizational activities. One must also use appropriate career strategies to match the career image one wishes to create. When possible it is advantageous to make one's career agendas seem congruent with organizational and occupational interests, to engage in the attitudes and activities for which current careerists are rewarded.

Maccoby (1976) discusses careerists in the technology industry. Those who seem to behave in ways most congruent with the industry needs and informal norms are most rewarded. Those least rewarded seem to have opted for strategies that blatently promoted their "personal" agendas. This is precisely why the "gamesman" is so effective as a careerist. In this book, Bailyn's chapter addresses different career types. The high-potential employee who exemplifies "non-work" (non-congruent)

interests confuses his employer. One of the critical issues for the employee is how to use strategies that will create more congruent career images--or at least less non-congruent ones. This has proved to be important in the military where balanced careerists, while actively pursuing their real interests, parade as warriors and, when necessary, go to sea or with the troops to substantiate that image.

In some of Bailyn's other work (1977, 1978) "accommodators" are those who are willing to subordinate work needs for the sake of the family and self-report to be happier in their personal and marital lives. Yet, they are not as rewarded by the organization as are those judged to be "careerists." One issue accommodators must probably face is how to give off more congruent career images while still accommodating. Because accommodation requires much time and energy at home, however, it imposes limitations on this strategy.

Evans and Bartolome (1978) found that most managers listed their families and personal lives as more important than their careers. Yet, at least between ages 25-35, they behaved in ways that demonstrated they were more career-oriented. It is this author's proposition that not only do employees get great fulfillment through work during the "identity" adult life stage but also they must behave so to establish the congruent career images that will gain them the equivalent of tenure, which probably comes for most at about age thirty-five.

The two strategies most viable for influencing career imagery can be categorized as "overt" and "covert." One can behave openly when his real agenda matches or appears to match the organizational reward system. Such an <u>overt strategy</u> for career switchers might be manifest in the following situations, for example:

- Person A has decided to seek maximum organizational rewards for five years in order to attain the financial backing and reputation to launch his next career. He works hard at being a model employee and then, to the surprise of everyone, quits suddenly to do something else.

- Person B, while traveling on legitimate business for the corporation, makes the contacts he needs to start his new career.

- Person C, while attending professional meetings, searches out some new career options.

- Person D seeks out legitimate and needed training and experience partially to help the organization and partially to help him pursue his next career.

All of the above presume that one appears to be performing adequately, even successfully, in his organizational career. In fact, he may be satisfying both current and future career interests simultaneously. He can use more overt political strategies.

When one feels he must pursue activities which may be viewed as non-congruent with organizational interests, he must use covert strategies. His objective may be to carefully mask his activities so that they seem congruent, are at least marginally related, or are not uncovered as being incongruent. Because pursuing a second career often requires a new work focus quite unrelated to the organization's interests, covert strategies, such as the following, are usually important in career switching:

- Person E seeks and gets a position in the enterprise which gives him lots of autonomy and he uses the free time and the organizational resources (e.g., telephone) to pursue his next venture.

- Person F is highly involved in out-of-work training and activities relevant to another career but is careful that those at work are unaware of the real purpose or the extent of his activities.

- Person G forms a secret coalition with others of the same mind and they cover for one another at work, thus freeing up the time and energy to advance their external interests.

- Person H gets the equivalent of tenure based on sterling past performance and uses this reputation to "coast"; while others perceive him as "getting retooled" for the next thrust, he works secretly on his new career.

- Person J does the minimum for remaining valued by the organization, with intermittent spurts of good performance so that he can be viewed as a "late bloomer," and uses the extra time and energy to achieve his own agenda.

The point here is that to achieve some kind of favorable rating in the on-going career, one must use strategies which project a favorable image. Sometimes a person can use overt means because they appear or are partially congruent. Sometimes it is necessary to employ covert strategies, masking activities that cannot be construed as congruent. Career switching allows for the use of both kinds of means depending on the situation but stresses, given the nature of the change, more covert methods.

Career switching is basically political. One's real self-interests must often be kept secret or distorted. The information exchanged is strategic. Playing a kind of game, one tries to achieve personal interests, non-congruent perhaps with those of the organization, with as little personal cost as possible. How one manages the transition period between careers is indicative of his political skill.

So far we have focused on the motives and strategies of the politics of career switching. How about the outcomes? What are the limits? Are there ethics in career politics such that it is the obligation of the careerist to be more loyal and the organization to facilitate better matching of interests (e.g., by offering multiple career paths and options)? This would be ideal, but the political forces naturally unleashed serve a similar function. Those who wish to pay the price of career success within organizations/occupations do what they can to advance up the

hierarchy. This certainly serves the organization's interests as well. In the case of career switchers, some of them are more balanced careerists and often find creative ways to serve both the organization/occupation and their next careers. In the case of high-potential second careerists, they might in fact be very productive in those instances where they can do the organization's work while pursuing their next venture. In general, the organization/occupation clearly takes advantage of some careerists and gets more than it gives; through the politics of career switching some are able to get as much or more than they return.

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